

Post-Office Notifications.

A mail will close
for Singapore, Ceylon, and London—**at 11 P.M.**
to-day, the 28th instant, at the General Post Office.
For Sweden and Army.—For Lap-Lap-Tomorrow, the 29th inst., at 7.30 A.M.

MAILS BY THE "FRENCH PACKET."
The French Mail Packet "AMAZONE" will be despatched on THURSDAY, the 29th inst., at noon, with the Mails—

To and through the United Kingdom and Colonies today; the 29th inst., and other Continents States (in a closed mail to France), to the Netherlands, Galle, Australia and New Zealand; Aden, Bombay, Réunion and Mauritius, and Alexandria.

The "French" Office will be open for the receipt of Ordinary Letters, Newspapers, Books, &c., until 11 A.M. on the 29th instant, after which no Letter can be received.

Mails for India, Ceylon, and of the Money Offices in the United Kingdom will begin until 5 P.M. on the 29th instant.

Letters for Registration will be received until 10 A.M. on the 30th instant.

F. W. MITCHELL,
Postmaster-General.
General Post Office,
Hongkong, 17th January, 1874.

MAILS BY THE "ENGLISH PACKET."
The English Contract Packet "AFCO" will be dispatched with the usual Mail Money Orders, &c., on THURSDAY, the 29th inst., at noon.

Money Orders on any of the Money Offices in the United Kingdom may be sent until 5 P.M. on the 4th February.

The "English" Office will be open until 6 P.M. on the 4th February.

Letters, &c., may be posted during the day in the box left open for their reception.

Letters for registration will be received until 10 A.M. on the 5th February.

Letters may be posted until 10 A.M. on the 5th February without late fee.

Letters posted after 10 A.M. on the 5th February will not be forwarded unless the Fee of 15 cents each as well as the postage prepaid.

The latest time for posting Letters addressed to India, &c., for Newspapers, Books, &c., is on the 5th February.

Late letters (but Letters only) addressed to the United Kingdom via Brazil, or to the Colonies, may be posted on board the "English" until 10 A.M. on the 5th February, on payment of a Late Fee of 45 cents each as well as to the postage.

F. W. MITCHELL,
Postmaster-General.
General Post Office,
Hongkong, 26th January, 1874.

It is hereby notified for general information that hereafterward the Tonnage on Letters addressed to Russia, when marked to be sent via Southampton, will be reduced to 40 per cent. onco.

F. W. MITCHELL,
Postmaster-General.
General Post Office,
Hongkong, 15th September, 1872.

The Post Office of Victoria (Australia) has given notice to the General Post Office in Hongkong that articles of Jewellery received in Colony are chargeable with Customs Duty if the undersigned considers it necessary to do so, and that the Public, who state that any letters or packets contain such articles sent through the Post are liable with their contents, to be forfeited.

F. W. MITCHELL,
Postmaster-General.
General Post Office,
Hongkong, 26th January, 1873.

NOTICE.

COMPAGNIE DES MESSEAGERIES MARITIMES.
PAQUEBOTS POSTE FRANÇAIS.

STEAM FOR SAIGON, SINGAPORE, BATAVIA, POINTE DE GALLE, ADEN, SUVA, ISMALI, PORT SAID, PAPELLES, AND MARSEILLES.

ALSO,
ST. DENIS, AND PORT LOUIS.

On Thursday, the 29th January, at noon, the Company's Steamship "AMAZONE," Commandant CHAMPAGNE with MALES, PASSENGERS, SPECIE OARGO, will leave this Port for the place above named.

Cargo and Specie will be registered for export as well as for Marseilles, and accept transit through Marseilles for the principal places of Europe.

Passenger orders will be granted till cargo will be received on board until 4th Specie and Parcels until 3 P.M. on the 29th January, 1874. (Parcels are not to be received after 11.30 A.M.) The rate of sailing, on Specie and Parcels, will be the same as ordinary. Contents and value of Packages required.

For further particulars, apply at the Company's Office.

O. BEIRAND,
Principal Agent.
Hongkong, 15th January, 1874.

STEAM FOR SINGAPORE, PENANG, POINT DE GALLE, ADEN, SUVA, MALTA, BRINDISI, ANCONA, VENICE, AND TERRANEO PORTS, AND SOUTHAMPTON.

ALSO,
BOMBAY, MADRAS, CALCUTTA, AUSTRALIA.

THE PENINSULAR AND ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY'S Steamship "AFRODITE," Captain Major M. J. H. PASSENGERS, SPECIE OARGO, will leave this Port for the above place on THURSDAY, the 5th February, at noon.

Cargo will be received on board until Specie and Parcels at the office until 2 P.M. on the 4th.

Particulars regarding Freight and passage, apply at the P. & O. S. N. Co.'s Office, Hongkong. CONTAINER REQUIRED.

* A Written Declaration of the Contents and Value of the Packages for the Overboard Routes required by the Egyptian Government and must be done by the Shipper, and countersigned by Agents, with the Bill of Lading with Parcels; and the Company do not themselves responsible for any Detention or Penalties which may happen from their negligence in such matters.

The Company reserve the option of forwarding all goods shipped by their Steamers Europe through Egypt, either by rail, canal or sea, or by steamers, or in vessels employed for the purpose.

Shippers are particularly requested to note the terms and conditions of the Company's Bill of Lading.

Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Co.'s Office, Hongkong, 26th January, 1874.

U. S. MAIL LINE.

PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY.

THROUGH TO NEW YORK, VIA PANAMA, VOUGHANT AT YOKOHAMA, AND SAN FRANCISCO.

THE S.S. "ALASKA" will leave Hongkong on THURSDAY, the 13th February, at 3 P.M., taking Passengers, Mails, and Freight, for Panama, the United States, and Europe.

Through Passenger Tickets and Bills of Lading are issued for transportation to Yokohama, Japan, Suva, San Francisco, ports in Mexico, Central and South America, and to New York and Europe, VIA PANAMA.

A Steamer of the Company will leave Suva, via the Indian Sea Ports, about the date, and make sole connection at Yokohama.

At New York and Aspinwall, Passengers have selection of various lines of Steamers to England, France, and Germany.

Return Passage Tickets issued at a reduction of 20 per cent. on regular rates.

Freight will be received on board until 4 P.M. on the 12th inst. Parcel Packages will be received at the Office until 5 P.M. of the day. All Parcel Packages must be marked address in full; value of same is required.

For further information as to Rates of Freight, apply to the Agency of the Company.

T. A. HARRISON,
Agent.
Hongkong, January 14th, 1874.

Extracts.

THE GREEK POINT.

Loving the Beautiful, they asked no more. But found in Nature's outward form the soul which filled all space, and harmonised the whole. In them the wisdom gleamed from Nature's love infused a vital energy; the store From whence they drew comforted no petty soul. They quaffed large draughts from Beauty's flowing bowl. In low words, the truth-revealing sound, The clear high heaven, and the stars of night, Revealed deep meaning to each listening sense, And filled it with divine intelligence. Till earth seemed circled with celestial light, Then, calmed and strengthened by a thought intense, They stood, supreme in loveliness and might.

JOHN DRYDEN.

LOVE AND PASSION.

I think the average novel is making and minding in the mind in its picture of true love. It makes the tender glow and glamour which related nature feel when they meet, true love. It is no such thing; it is true passion, that is a blessed power, purely and rightly used, but no more true love than those little books and tenders we see in London, showing signs of the true character of October. For true love grows out of reverence and deference, loyalty and courtesy, good service given and taken, dark days and bright days, sorrow and joy. It is the fine essence of all we are together, and all we do. True passion comes first, true love last. It is a natural law, it is a spiritual law. The first man of the earth, early, but the second man is the Lord from Heaven. Robert Colver.

THE LEGEND OF THE FELT HAT.

There is a legend among the latters that felt was invented by no less a personage than St. Clement, the patron saint of the trade. Wanting to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, and at the same time to do penance for sundry unexplained peccadilloes, the pious man started on his journey about A.D. 300. He was afflicted with a severe case of indigestion, the ancient chronicler from which the information is derived is silent, but at all events, a few days' successive tramping soon began to blister his feet. In order to obtain relief, it occurred to him to line his shoes with the fur of a rabbit. This he did, and, as a result, he found that the moisture of his feet had worked the soft hair into a cloth-like mass. The idea thus suggested he elaborated in the solitude of his cell, and, finally, there being no patent laws in existence in those days, he gratuitously presented to his fellow-mortals the result of his genius in the shape of a felt hat.

SKATING IN THE THIERGARTEN.

Here was a Babel of languages; a babel of every country and of every rank—social or military—were talking about; old women pulled up to avoid bumping against Ambassadors, and young subalterns flew off on the outside edge to let a General continue uninterrupted his mad career. Every military man was in uniform, sword and such as scrupulously put on as if he were on parade, and—excepting the few who were on parade—military uniforms were not at all made to make the most difficult turns in complete marching order. I have heard men grumble at being obliged to walk about the streets in uniform, and certainly, even in my wildest flight of imagination, I have never gone as far as to picture to myself a full-blown life Guardsman, boots, spurs, and helmet, and, exactly as he stands every day at the Horse Guards, with the addition of a pair of skates, going at the rate of about 20 miles an hour down the Serpentine, balanced on one leg, but in the Thiergarten I saw many plagues of this description, and my eyes got so accustomed to these strange sights that I had seen the Field Officer of the day skating round the Guards on horseback. I should not have been the least surprised.—From "A Scamp's to Scamp's," by J. Crough.

THE KING OF DAHOMEY AND HIS FEMALE WARRIORS.

Of all the African kingdoms, it is, perhaps, in Dahomey alone that a pure despotism may be said to exist. The king is the army; he is the king; but the King of Dahomey has a standing army, and women are his Praetorian guards. Many African kings select from their numerous wives the most robust and ill-favored as a female body-guard. Some King of Dahomey developed this institution, and organized regiments of Amazons. These women are not merely ornamental household troops; Domon (a Dahomean) considered them better soldiers than the men. Their drill is severe, their courage is undoubted, and their whole hearts and souls are devoted to their profession. They are called the king's wives, but may be defined as military units. It sometimes happens, however, that one of them is admitted to the harem; for a colonel recently became a monarch. The queens of Dahomey and the Amazons are attended by eunuchs and Dakolos, or handmaids. The machinery of the courts is complicated and complete. The chief eunuch, the highest personage in the land. The present Grand Viceroy was a common soldier who was sent to prison for some offence, and raised to this office by the king; a fact which shows how great is the power of the monarch. All officials are appointed in pairs, each supervising and checking the other. No cabocher, or chief, is allowed to visit another in his house; they may only speak to one another in the street, and their relations are royal spies. The Government of Wiyah, the emperor, is forced to receive as wives ladies of the blood-royal, and they report on his proceedings to the king. Cowries, a kind of shell, form the circulating medium, and the king refuses to alter the currency. "A man cannot hide cowries," he says, and "so I will take what every man has." It is dangerous to become too rich in Dahomey. When a chief dies the king inherits his title and possessions; he sometimes confers the Umbrella and the Staff of the confederate on the lawful heir, but usually on a stranger, who is bound to support the family of the deceased. All marriages are shown to the king, who sometimes takes them for his harem, sometimes for the Guards, sometimes he gives them back to their parents. Taxes are levied in the market on goods exposed for sale. There are turnpikes and ferries belonging to the State. All cocks that crow on the king's highway except to the crown; these birds are, therefore, mutilated by their owners. Women of the town are licensed, and their charges regulated by tariff. The laws are moral and severe. Theft cannot be committed by a fine. Adulterers are sold as slaves. King Goro used to keep a drunkard on rum, that his hideous aspect might deter the people from that vice; and the present king is a teetotalist.

In the old days of the slave trade the king used to live by the fruit of the spear. He still goes to war every April. Some of the prisoners are enslaved, or serve in the army; others are slain as a sacrifice. They are killed purely for motives of virtue and mild affection, being sent to the land of the dead by their owners. Women of the town bear him some message from his faithful son.—"The African Sketch Book," by Wm. W. Howells.

THACKERAY AND DICKENS.

There was one feeling about the author of "Vanity Fair" which tried him sorely, and overpowered a thorn in his side, and that was the adulation paid to Dickens. One day, while dining in company, at a friend's house, with the above two intellectual giants of a race now nearly extinct, the conversation, after the ladies had left the room, took a literary turn; and a young man who sat next to Charles Dickens, and immediately opposite Thackeray, and myself, began to praise Dickens to his face in a most fulsome manner. All of a sudden Thackeray stopped in the middle of a sentence, turned his chair round, as if to escape from the sound of the flatterer's tongue, and, addressing me in a voice full of bitterness, said, "Did you hear that? I go no more where but I am subject to it. I should not mind to hear Lytton Bulwer praised to the skies, for I own my inferiority; but, when he held down his head, and was silent for some minutes. After a time I ventured to say, 'If you had been sitting where Dickens was, the same remark would probably have been made to you, for the young man that made it evidently drew it out of the most Dundreary fashion.' Nothing, however, that would have seemed to rouse Thackeray from his lethargy; and he shortly afterwards left the room.—My Recollections, by Lord William Lennox.

BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

The growing interest in this country in India's affairs is pleasingly attested by the fact that the first edition of so expensive a work as "The Sacred Scriptures of the Buddhists" is less than four years old. A new edition of this interesting book is now produced, under the safe conduct of the India Office, which is yet more valuable than its predecessor, both in respect of plates and text. The plates have been rearranged and added to, and the text has been materially altered, and in great part rewritten. The work gives an account of the remains of two of the most celebrated types, or at least, raised in honour of Buddha and his doctrines—one being at Sanchi, near Billis, in Central India, the other at Amaravati, near the mouth of the river Krishna. Our readers are no doubt aware that a tape is a solid circular dome-like construction, surmounting the stupa or stupa. Buddha's stupa is the lower portion being surrounded by a path-way for performing worshippers, inclosed by a stone railing, pierced by four gateways at right angles to each other. The ruins of two such buildings are illustrated in the book before us, as we have said, at Sanchi, the other at Amaravati. The latter is considerably superior in date to the former, so that the comparison of the magnificent sculptures with which both buildings are elaborately adorned, reveals much of the change in sentiment that had passed over the Buddhist community in the interval. The Buddhist religion is certainly one of the most remarkable emanations of the human mind, and this becomes especially apparent when we reflect upon its feeble beginning, its peaceful course, its stupendous development, and its tremendous hold upon the affections of the immense majority of mankind. It is also most remarkable for the singular parallel its history presents to that of the Christian faith. Both originated in numbers of royal races; both won their way by preaching and by the practice of austere life, honesty, and truth; both firmly established themselves after 300 or 400 years, by becoming State religions; both gradually corrupted for about a thousand years until a revolution reconstructed them; both were driven from the lands of their birth, and are now professed by aliens and strangers to their founders. Yet it is most certain that the growth of each was distinct from the other; there never was a point of union between the two creeds until modern missionaries sailed for the East. Buddha died 477 years before the birth of Christ, and his religion was adopted by King Asoka 600 years before Constantine the Great. Inscriptions on pillars and rocks, and ancient writings, poems, besides the direct statements of the Mahayana, attest the originality and priority of Buddha's work; at the same time the light of history shines clearly on the origin of Christianity, and places its perfect independence of extraneous suggestion beyond all cavil. The Buddhist religion, therefore, is a subject, alike interesting to the antiquary, the historian, the scholar, the philosopher, and the theologian, and everything tending to elucidate its history throws light upon a remarkable phase of human development.—Oriental.

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